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Industrial Disputes, Australia

The number of disputes (strikes or lockouts), employees involved and working days lost; cause of dispute; duration; and the reason work resumed

Reference period September 2022

Released 8/12/2022

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Key statistics

In the September quarter 2022:

- 70 disputes occurred.
- 22,200 employees were involved and 28,100 working days lost.
- disputes occurred in 8 industries and in 8 states and territories.

During the year ended September 2022, there were 182 disputes and a total of 244,200 working days lost.

Key Statistics

Quarter	Year ended			
	June Quarter 2022	September Quarter 2022	September Quarter 2021	September Quarter 2022
Number of disputes (no.)				
New	45	60	118	164
Total	52	70	123	182
Employees involved ('000)				
New	71.2	21.2	22.2	153.2
Total	73.7	22.2	22.6	159.8
Working days lost ('000)	128.1	28.1	64.6	244.2

Guide to labour statistics

To learn more about our different labour measures, their purpose and how to use them, see our [Guide to labour statistics \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics). It provides summary information on labour market topics including [Industry employment \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/industry-employment-guide\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/industry-employment-guide) and [Earnings \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/earnings-guide\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/earnings-guide) data.

Overview

In the September quarter 2022, there were:

- 70 disputes, 18 more than from the previous quarter.
- 22,200 employees involved, a decrease from 73,700 in the previous quarter.
- 28,100 working days lost, a decrease from 128,100 in the previous quarter.

Year ended estimates:

- 182 disputes occurred, 59 more than in the previous year.
- 244,200 working days were lost, 179,700 more than the previous year.

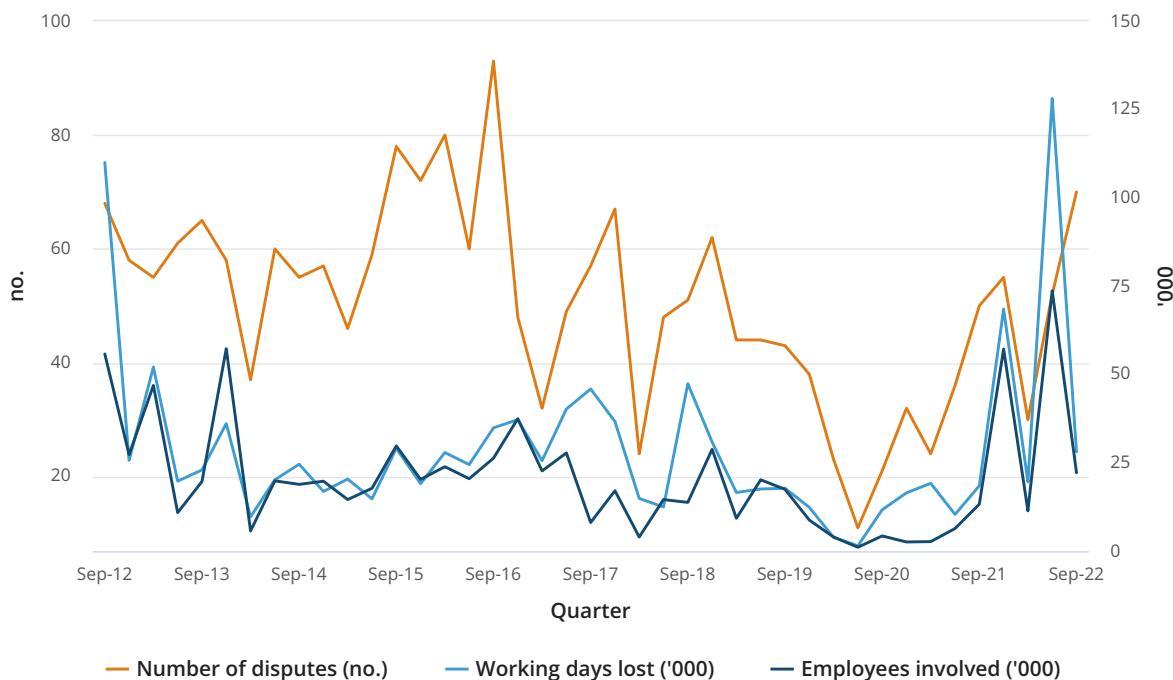
Industrial disputes which occurred during the quarter

	Number of disputes		Employees involved		Working days lost
	New (no.)	Total (no.)	New ('000)	Total ('000)	('000)
September Quarter 2020	19	21	4.2	4.3	11.7
December Quarter 2020	27	32	2.2	2.6	16.5
March Quarter 2021	22	24	2.3	2.7	19.2
June Quarter 2021	30	36	6.0	6.4	10.4
September Quarter 2021	39	50	11.7	13.3	18.5
December Quarter 2021	37	55	50.6	57.2	68.5
March Quarter 2022	22	30	10.1	11.4	19.6
June Quarter 2022	45	52	71.2	73.7	128.1
September Quarter 2022	60	70	21.2	22.2	28.1

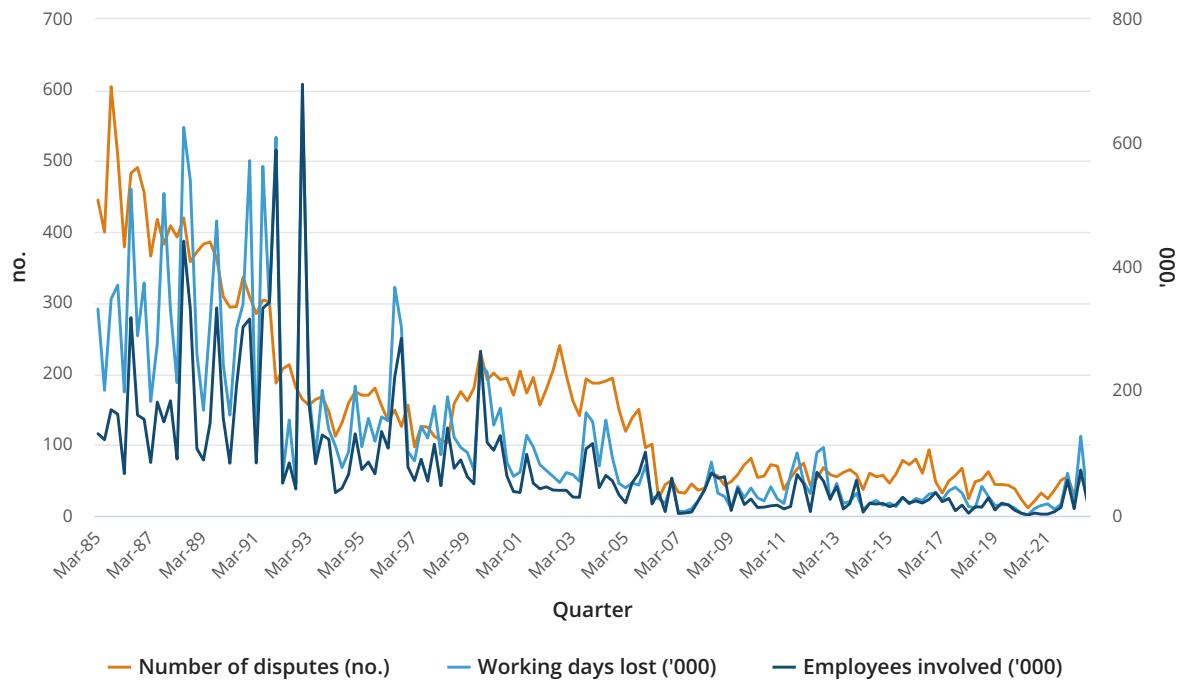
Long-term trends

The level of industrial disputation over recent years is considerably lower than in the 1980's and prior decades.

Industrial disputes in the last 10 years, Australia



Industrial disputes historical series, Australia



Industry

In the September quarter, disputes occurred in eight industries. Over a quarter (27%) of the total working days lost were in the Education and training; Health care and social assistance industry.

Industrial disputes which occurred during the quarter, industry

	June Quarter 2022		September Quarter 2022	
	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)
Mining				
Coal mining	np	np	np	np
Other mining	0.1	0.5	np	np
Manufacturing				
Metal product etc (a)	np	np	1.8	6.1
Other manufacturing	0.7	1.4	1.0	1.9
Construction	0.6	0.6	3.1	3.0
Transport, postal & warehousing	2.6	4.3	1.9	3.1
Education & training; Health care & social assistance	116.6	39.2	7.6	2.5
Other industries (a)	6.9	1.0	4.1	0.6
All industries	128.1	10.4	28.1	2.3

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

(a) see Glossary - [Industry \(<https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/industrial-disputes-australia-methodology/sep-2022#glossary>\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/industrial-disputes-australia-methodology/sep-2022#glossary) - for details of industries included

States and territories

Disputes occurred in eight states and territories in the September quarter, with more than half (52%) of the total working days lost occurring in New South Wales.

Industrial disputes which occurred during the quarter, states and territories

	June Quarter 2022		September Quarter 2022	
	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)
New South Wales	120.6	31.2	14.6	3.8
Victoria	2.9	0.9	2.5	0.8
Queensland	0.6	0.2	2.4	1.0
South Australia	1.8	2.3	2.0	2.5
Western Australia	1.3	0.9	np	np
Tasmania	-	-	2.3	9.8
Northern Territory	0.1	0.7	1.7	13.8
Australian Capital Territory	0.7	3.3	np	np
Australia	128.1	10.4	28.1	2.3

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

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Cause of dispute

Most industrial disputes are Enterprise Bargaining (EB) related. Over the past 10 years, disputes over employment conditions have generally been the most prevalent.

EB related issues were the cause of 88% of disputes (37 of 42) which ended in the June quarter 2022.

Cause of disputes which ended during the quarter

Number of disputes (no.)	March Quarter 2022		June Quarter 2022	
	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
Enterprise Bargaining related				
Remuneration	6	2.2	2.9	9.3
Employment conditions	11	0.9	2.4	19.7
Other	-	-	-	-
Non-Enterprise Bargaining related				
Remuneration	1	np	np	-
Employment conditions	1	-	-	-
Health and safety	3	4.2	3.1	0.3
Job security	-	-	1	np
Managerial policy	1	np	np	0.1
Union issues	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	1	np
Total	23	8.0	8.8	29.5
				48.9

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

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Working days lost

Working days lost is a measure of the length of a dispute, relative to the number of employees involved.

Of the 42 disputes which ended in the June quarter, 27 lasted up to and including 1 day.

These disputes had:

- 13,700 employees involved; and
- 13,200 working days lost.

Working days lost for disputes which ended during the quarter

	March Quarter 2022		June Quarter 2022			
	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
Up to and including 1 day	9	6.7	4.2	27	13.7	13.2
Over 1 day and up to including 2 days	2	np	np	3	10.0	18.4
Over 2 and less than 5 days	10	1.1	3.6	8	5.3	11.7
5 and less than 10 days	1	np	np	3	0.3	1.6
10 days and over	1	np	np	1	0.2	3.9
Total	23	8.0	8.8	42	29.5	48.9

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Reason work resumed

The reason work resumed relates to the last day of action taken. Resumption of work can occur without resolution to the issues that triggered the dispute.

There was a pre-determined return to work for 88% of disputes (37 of 42) which ended in the June quarter 2022.

Reason work resumed for disputes which ended during the quarter

	March Quarter 2022			June Quarter 2022		
	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
Negotiation without intervention of a third party	-	-	-	5	0.3	4.1
State legislation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Federal legislation	2	-	-	-	-	-
Pre-determined return to work	15	2.8	4.6	37	29.2	44.8
Resumption without negotiation	4	1.9	1.5	-	-	-
Mediation	2	3.3	2.6	-	-	-
Other reasons	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	23	8.0	8.8	42	29.5	48.9

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

Data downloads

Time Series Spreadsheets

[!\[\]\(9c4f697052545ae4fab36076e03db94f_img.jpg\) Download all \(481.32 KB\)](#)

Table 1: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period

[!\[\]\(fc3a57079704ef1b99671c8cafae23be_img.jpg\) Download XLSX](#)

[\[58.83 KB\]](#)

Table 2a: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost, industry

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[\[53.53 KB\]](#)

Table 2b: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost per thousand employees, industry

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Table 3a: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost, states and territories

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[63.48 KB]

Table 3b: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost per thousand employees, states and territories

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[61.99 KB]

Table 4a: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, cause of dispute

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[92.22 KB]

Table 4b: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, working days lost per employee involved

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[63.24 KB]

Table 4c: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, reason work resumed

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Enquiries

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This release previously used catalogue number 6321.0.55.001.

Methodology

[Industrial Disputes, Australia methodology, September 2022](#)